

Message Text

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14

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FBO-02 L-03 /016 W

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R 050852Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5697

INFO AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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FOR NEA/EX AND NEA/ARP FOR LYLE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ABLD, KU

SUBJ: HOUSING FOR DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION - KUWAIT

REF: A) KUWAIT 2984, B) STATE 099251, C) KUWAIT 1801

1. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, EMBASSY IS IN DISPUTE WITH VARIOUS LOCAL LANDLORDS SEEKING SUBSTANTIAL RENT INCREASES. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED REFTEL B, EMBASSY IS ATTEMPTING TO HOLD THE LINE, DEPOSITING RENT PAYMENTS FOR SEVERAL PROPERTIES WITH LOCAL COURTS.

2. AN IMMEDIATE PROBLEM CENTERS AROUND THE PROPERTY LEASED FOR THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION. THE DCM RESIDENCE WAS LEASED TWO YEARS AGO AT MONTHLY COST OF APPROXIMATELY \$1400 FROM YACOUB YOUSEF MOTAWWA, THEN SERVING AS COUNSELOR AT THE KUWAIT EMBASSY IN LONDON. THE LEASE, COPIED FROM 6 FAM 700, WAS WRITTEN FOR TWO YEARS (EXPIRATION

SEPTEMBER 1, 1976), WITH AN INDEFINITE NUMBER OF ONE-YEAR OPTIONS TO RENEW. MOTAWWA WAS CALLED BACK UNEXPECTEDLY TO KUWAIT IN MID-1975 TO ASSUME THE POSITION OF DEPUTY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL (IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS FOR DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ACCREDITED TO KUWAIT). AT THAT TIME HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD RELEASE THE PROPERTY, INDICATING HE AND HIS FAMILY INTENDED TO OCCUPY THE HOUSE. HE WAS TOLD THE EMBASSY WAS WILLING TO CONSIDER THE MATTER, PROVIDED HE COULD LOCATE A SUITABLE PROPERTY AT THE SAME

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COST FOR THE DCM'S USE.

3. MOTAWWA MADE SOME EFFORT TO FIND ALTERNATIVE HOUSING, BUT WAS UNABLE TO LOCATE A COMPARABLE RESIDENCE IN THE SAME PRICE RANGE IN KUWAIT'S RAPIDLY INFLATING LOCAL HOUSING MARKET. NEVERTHELESS, IN FEBRUARY 1976, HE GAVE FORMAL WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE EMBASSY THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO RENEW THE LEASE WHEN IT EXPIRED IN SEPTEMBER, 1976. IN MAY, HE RENEWED HIS REQUEST THAT THE HOUSE BE VACATED BY SEPTEMBER 1.

4. THE MOTAWWA LEASE HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE EMBASSY'S LEGAL COUNSEL, ALONG WITH OTHER DISPUTED LEASES. COUNSEL ADVISED THAT, IF MOTAWWA CAN PROVE THAT PROPERTY IS HIS LEGAL RESIDENCE AND THAT HE HAS NO OTHER RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY IN KUWAIT, LOCAL COURTS UNDOUBTEDLY WILL UPHOLD HIS RIGHT TO REOCCUPY HIS HOUSE. INQUIRES BY THE EMBASSY TO THE KUWAIT MUNICIPALITY INDICATE ONLY ONE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY, THAT LEASED FOR THE DCM, IS REGISTERED IN MOTAWWA'S NAME.

5. BASED ON THE ADVICE OF COUNSEL, THE EMBASSY ORALLY INFORMED MOTAWWA MAY 22 THAT IT WAS WILLING TO RELEASER HIS PROPERTY TO HIM ON SEPTEMBER 30, PROVIDED HE REOCCUPIED THE HOUSE. THE EMBASSY AGREED TO MAKE ONE-HALF THE BIENNIAL PAYMENT CALLED FOR IN THE LEASE DOCUMENT IN PAYMENT OF RENT OVER THE ABOVE PERIOD. PAYMENT WAS MADE IN LATE JUNE.

6. EFFORTS BY THE EMBASSY TO LOCATE A COMPARABLE RESIDENCE FOR THE DCM AT REASONABLE COST HAVE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR THE EMBASSY'S NEW DCM (MR. PETER SUTHERLAND) TO BE HOUSED ON ARRIVAL IN KUWAIT ABOUT JULY 20 IN THE HOUSE FORMERLY OCCUPIED BY THE EMBASSY'S RECENTLY DEPARTED ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER. THIS RESIDENCE IS CONSIDERED AN ADEQUATE, BUT NOT ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY SUBSTITUTE FOR THE MOTAWWA RESIDENCE. THE HOUSE, RENTED FOUR YEARS AGO, COSTS APPROXIMATELY \$850 PER MONTH.

7. THE EMBASSY FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO CHALLENGE MOTAWWA'S CLAIM THAT HE INTENDS TO REOCCUPY HIS PROPERTY ON A PERMANENT BASIS. MOREOVER, FACT OF HIS PRESENT POSITION (HE IS ALSO COUSIN OF CHIEF OF PROTOCOL) MAKES IT AWKWARD FOR EMBASSY TO REFUSE TO RESPOND TO HIS REQUEST. HOWEVER, WE HAVE JUST HEARD RUMOR THAT HE MAY BE TRANSFERRED TO WASHINGTON IN EARLY 1977. IF THIS SHOULD OCCUR, MOTAWWA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNDOUBTEDLY WILL WISH TO RENT HIS HOUSE AGAIN. WE SUSPECT HOUSE COULD BE LEASED IN THE PRESENT MARKET AT ABOUT \$3400 PER MONTH. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE ARE EXTREMELY LOATHE TO GIVE UP THE PROPERTY IF, IN FACT, MOTAWWA IS TO ACCEPT EARLY ASSIGNMENT TO WASHINGTON.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: IT IS REQUESTED THAT NEA/ARP JOHN LYLE MAKE DISCREET INQUIRIES OF KUWAIT EMBASSY TO SEEK TO LEARN WHETHER

MOTAWWA,
IN FACT, IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR ASSIGNMENT TO WASHINGTON. IF THIS
PROVES TO BE THE CASE, IT WOULD BE INTENTION OF THE EMBASSY TO INSIST
THAT MOTAWWA CONTINUE TO RENT HIS PROPERTY TO THE EMBASSY UNDER THE
TERMS OF THE EXISTING LEASE.REQUEST DEPART'S
ADVICE ON THIS MATTER ASAP.
MAESTRONE

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